5: Schwimmer E-4,5 (1966-1967) 1973
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tendency is to use money income to purchase goods needed for daily life but obtainable in the subsistence sector of the economy (Waddell and Krinks 1968: 192). Only a small minority of the goods used by Orokaiva fall into this category, but if the tendency to exclude most store-bought goods from the gift exchange system continues, we may expect that system gradually to decline in importance as the monetary sector of the economy increases.

In the political sphere, the traditional system of control is still generally in operation at the village level. Under this system some men may exert great influence over a community, but they cannot enforce compliance by physical sanctions. While the Orokaiva generally maintain this system, an exception is made for councillors and committee men acting under delegated power from the government. These men may lay complaints with Australian authority and in practice do not always disdain to do so. Among the New Zealand Maori, any leader who so much as threatens to invoke European authority risks being nicknamed 'Mr. Government' and losing all influence. Not so among the Orokaiva; the argument is that it is better for such powers to be used by an Orokaiva official than by the government itself. Nonetheless, use of authority outside the extended family goes against the Orokaiva ethos and undermines the exchange system in a minor way, because an official, by invoking his *authority*, can obtain something from Alter without becoming indebted to Alter. A traditional leader, under the same circumstances, might have incurred a debt or drawn on a kind of credit balance. Here again, the departure from the traditional exchange system does not greatly intrude in everyday affairs, but is symptomatic of the type of changes social development would bring. There has thus been a growing inconsistency between the norms of the traditional exchange system and the facts of labour migration, cash cropping, adherence to the Christian Church, attendance at meetings called by councillors, school education, use of medical services, changes in house architecture, participation in women's clubs, savings and loan societies, rubber co-operatives and the like. How, if at all, did Orokaiva thought cope with these basic inconsistencies?

I have explained how traditional institutions are accounted for. When I inquired why it is that mankind wears clothing, makes fires, contracts marriages, I would be told myths about the *dema* responsible for these institutions. I would also be told that after the *dema* had shown men how to act in these matters there had never been any change. There was primordial time during which men lived, one might say, in the state of nature. In spite of the absence of strife and death that era was not invariably represented as a happy one. Women were desolate because they had no men to marry, no fire to cook with, no houses to live in. In spite of most obstinate and desperate efforts, graphically described in the myths, mankind failed to get the things it needed. The *dema* thus brought release from suffering when they introduced cultural goods, techniques and rules of behaviour. But after the *dema* died, nothing ever changed again.

While such beliefs belie any suggestions that the Orokaiva are without history,[1] it remains true that the Orokaiva repertoire of historical explanations is very small. The actions of the *dema*, the scission of lineages comparable to the branches of a tree, the settlement of villages by men sleeping under a *barevo* tree – this completes the set of traditional historical explanations of which I have knowledge. How could the Orokaiva, confined to this set of concepts, find

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a rationale, satisfying to themselves, for the behaviour patterns they are now adopting in response to the impact of the white man's power? This is the question to be explored in the next section of this chapter. I shall put foward the suggestion that the Orokaiva actually developed an interesting and satisfactory explanation of recent cultural changes, using the concept of a new *dema* who set new exchange cycles into motion. In demonstrating this point, I shall quote at length from informants' statements so as to indicate clearly the nature of the primary evidence on which I have drawn.

2. *A New Starting Mechanism*

I shall begin by quoting a tape-recorded speech made by a member of the Higaturu local government council at a meeting held at Torogota village, Sasembata valley.[2] The reader may well doubt the sincerity of this speech, as I did myself when I first heard it. I discovered, however, that councillors frequently address meetings in similar terms. Trusted Sivepe informants told me that the recorded speech is typical of what that councillor usually said. It was elicited when I asked the men of Torogota for tales about olden times (*iji matu*).

The councillor started with a sketch of the wars of his forebears. His 'grandfather' Bohuka, with a group of migrants from Waseta, and other villages, drove off the inhabitants of a village called Hingo Kakasita and settled on the land of that village:

> Today his grandchildren call this our land, but they are weak grandchildren of strong ancestors. . . . All this is communal land (*company enda*) conquered by our forebears. As a new day has now arrived, I tell you to be united. Therefore you must follow my instructions. The councillor for Sasembata is speaking. Everybody who speaks north, east, south or west should now stop.
>
> Now I am speaking about this old village here. I am Councillor Ase. I am saying: follow this word and hear it. I shall therefore tell you how they (i.e. the Europeans, the *taupa*) talk: 'Those men were all felling the tree. The man whose name I mentioned was a fighting man. His enemies killed the wayfarer like a dog. The Waseta people beat and chased them, came here and stayed.'
>
> I am councillor Ase. Here we live, people, in this very old village. We are the descendants of fighting ancestors, therefore we live here. We say that we live in the land where the *seha* grows (a useless bush tree) or where the *inota* grows (a useless cane looking like a sugar cane) or on *gindiri* (i.e. sandy, infertile) soil. We stay in an old village, but people are saying we are living on communal land; we are staying on a place we took during a raid. They are saying: 'The Waseta men had weak descendants. They stayed here because they were defeated.'

A little later during the same recording session, Councillor Ase spoke again. This time he started with a description of various magical powers traditionally possessed by the Orokaiva. He continued:

> In those days people did these things. They did not take jobs for only Jesus Christ gave jobs that people could take. The village constable bound people (with handcuffs) and took them if he believed they were telling lies. He took them to Kokoda and Court was held; then they would start work . . .

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When a summons was issued by the village constable, then those magic things were put to work (to save the accused from conviction) . . .

In those days men worked for a while but then stopped shifting the earth. The village constable bound them and they went to court in Kokoda. If the court thought they were lying or if they said 'I don't know,' they were taken away and the governor stopped their work. This is the tale of those men of olden days.

Although the passages quoted here are full of obscurities, the situation in which these speeches were delivered makes them worthy of careful analysis. The councillor, who was born in Torogota, had recently moved to Kongohambo, a neighbouring village built in modern style. Some families had accompanied him, but he wanted Torogota village to be abandoned altogether and the whole population transferred to Kongohambo. In his first speech, he gave reasons with which he hoped to persuade his people. We are thus given a glimpse of the social philosophy of his listeners. Although the latter had no intention of leaving Torogota, they did share the basic sentiments to which the councillor appealed. They agreed communal ownership of land was no longer quite fashionable, the village was getting too old, too much land was lying idle, it was bad for labourers to be unreliable, it was bad to kill wayfarers like dogs. They desired to emulate the feats of their ancestors and they knew this could no longer be done by raiding neighbouring villages. This traditional road to renown is no longer open; obviously, new roads have to be found.

The main burden of the councillor's speech was that his people had not found these new roads to power: *ivo ambupu-ta ahihijera*. (Strong ancestors have reared feeble descendants.) *Ivo* (strength, power) is a basic concept in Orokaiva thought, and is somewhat similar to the Polynesian concept *mana*. It is the quality that enables man to be successful in 'ways with which ordinary technique cannot cope' (Firth 1967: 191). It is transmitted to a man by his father at the time of conception, and is augmented by the fact of success, and particularly by the killing of an animal or an enemy, the eating of meat, or the making of gifts. Bohuka, the ancestor of the councillor's lineage, and his companions, undoubtedly had *ivo* which was augmented by their conquests, but his descendants who inherited this *ivo* stood to lose it unless they themselves achieved something of commensurate importance. The Orokaiva, unlike the Tikopia, do not think of this magical efficacy as being essentially an attribute of chiefs or leaders, though men of influence do have *ivo* to an exceptional degree. In the terms of the theory developed in the present work, *ivo* is always an object of exchange, received from an exchange partner, often in the form of meat, as will be shown in Chapter VII. The ultimate source of *ivo*, however, are *dema* figures such as Totoima and Pekuma who first gave *ivo* to man.

The councillor's second speech is one of several pieces of evidence that lead me to suggest that the Orokaiva regard Jesus Christ as a *dema* figure and a powerful source of *ivo*. A Papuan pastor was the first to put this idea to me when we discussed an Orokaiva dance performed at his Church during the Christmas service. The dancers, dressed in traditional garb and beating drums, filing in a wide circle past the cross erected on the mission station, sang a traditional chant originally performed after a victim had been killed in a cannibal raid. The pastor drew my attention to the similarity between the killing of such

generations of undisturbed occupation and have reinforced their position by frequent marriage connections and subsequent kinship ties with the Tandai'undi, they still recognize that some residual rights are held by the Tandai'undi. The extent of these rights cannot be closely defined except in relation to specific situations. For instance all parties seem to be agreed that the Tandai'undi could not plant the Inonda land without the approval of the leader of the Andiriha sub-clan and in fact they neither plant nor hunt there. Likewise, it is agreed that if the Andiriha died out their rights would revert to the Tandai'undi. Although there is no disagreement about rights of this nature, trouble would almost certainly arise in the event of incidents (such as cash sale of land to an outside group) for which there is no traditional precedent.

It is perhaps significant that most of the Inonda people have planted their cash crops on the other side of the Girua river on land to which the Tandai'undi have no claim. Moreover, a recent survey by the Lands Department shows Inonda as Tandai'undi land, though the Inonda people consider this to be an error.(1)

According to the oral history of the Inonda people, they have acquired land rights at various times by discovery and settlement of vacant land (at Aramba), by permissive occupation (at Wauta and Sambogo) and by customary transfer (at Inonda). Conversely they have lost rights by defeat in war (at Aramba) and by voluntary abandonment (at Wauta and Sambogo).

The Inonda people have shifted their village at least eight times in the course of the past fifty years and on the first three occasions they shifted to completely different areas of planting and hunting land. With each shift they have acquired some new land rights and lost others. In no case have they acquired all rights to the lands they moved onto and in no case have they lost all rights to the lands they left.

(1) Map held by National Mapping office entitled, "Land Tenure in the Ihase'embo Native District, Orokaiva, Northern District" prepared by W.A. McGrath 7.4.1959.

buy cheap cloth and durable iron or aluminium pots at the trade stores. Although every housewife now has two or three large manufactured pots, she keeps them for cooking the food for feasts. Most of the daily meals are still prepared in clay pots but few of these pots were obtained by the old barter methods; most were obtained as gifts from friends or relatives. At one wedding, for example, the bride received fourteen clay cooking pots, in addition to a large supply of mats, string bags, enamel plates, and dishes: enough to last for years to come.

ECONOMIC CHANGE AND THE PATTERN OF SETTLEMENT

A very close relationship exists between economic change, particularly the planting of cash crops, and changes in the pattern of settlement. Although most development has occurred in the last twenty years, there is evidence, supported by the oral traditions of Yega elders, to show that some evolution of settlement had occurred even before the first contact with white men. By tradition the Yega were sea people. This probably means that they arrived as migrants and originally spent most of their time aboard their canoes and lived mainly upon seafood. They settled first on three small islands, Baroda Deuga, about half a mile north-east of Waususu Point (Fig. 9). These islands are today only a few feet above high tide and are composed entirely of coarse

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[133] coral sand and lumps of dead coral. Although there are mangrove trees on the islands, there would be no possibility of growing food crops there. At some time well before the arrival of white men, the Yega moved from Baroda Deuga and founded a large village, Basabuga, on the eastern shore of Waususu Point. In Basabuga each clan was allocated a specific
[614] area in which family heads built their homes. Probably there were only three original clans, but these were joined at intervals by the ancestors of the other five clans who now make up the Yega parish. Basabuga is in an ideal defensive site, protected on the landward side by mangrove swamps to the south-east, and on the south-western side by swamp filled depressions running parallel to the beach. The sea provided an escape route to the north.

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[871] By about 1910 when the first school was begun at Waususu Point, some clans had moved eastward or westward and settled in other coastal villages. In each village the male
361 members of a clan lived together with their
614 wives and children, and although there was a good deal of inter-clan contact, the clan village was the main social unit. The main reason for the dispersal of clans from Basabuga was probably population pressure but the enforced cessation of inter-parish warfare undoubtedly contributed. The movement
361 westward along the beach continued until about 1930. People were encouraged to move by the
[651] increasing effectiveness of Government control
[799] and by the establishment at Gona Mission of a school and hospital staffed by Europeans.

[P.12-8]

829 I thought at first that this representation of Orokaiva history
●173 (from the dark ages into a great future) was put on specially for my benefit. When I found Orokaiva were talking to each other in precisely the same terms, I thought that this view was held perhaps principally by persons with a vested interest, such as councillors, committee, etc. However, as I stayed longer, and became somewhat more trusted, I could still find no trace of nostalgia for customs that had been abandoned. I did, of course, become aware of the deep attachment the Orokaiva have for those of their traditional customs which they still practise, and values which they still hold.

[124] I shall quote in detail one document, a tape recorded speech
[126] made by a councillor in the Orokaiva language, which is typical of the present Christian Orokaiva self-group image. I have a number of others, consistent with this one in essence, though differing in some details to which I shall draw attention. Though Councillor Colin's speech was specially made up to be recorded by me on tape, during a session when several other recordings were made, its general tenor was no different from the speeches he interminably made at other times. The only slant that may have been unusual was the extent to which he referred to past history. I had asked, on this occasion for stories of olden times (iji matu). The councillor started with a brief sketch of the wars of his forebears; he stressed that he and his listeners were the descendants of strong fighting men who killed wayfarers as though they were dogs, and who conquered the lands of others. "Now, there is a new day, and therefore we must be united." Later, the councillor described, for my benefit, some of the traditional magic. But, he said, people did not get paid jobs, but Jesus Christ (first) gave jobs for people to take. The village constable would drag them to Kokoda in chains for having told lies, and the magicians would be put to work to stop them from being convicted. They would be fired from their jobs for idling. Such were the old days.

[177] This story stressed the most widely accepted differences between the old and the new way of life: war vs. peace, danger vs. security, division vs. unity, magic vs. Christianity, poverty vs. wealth, simplicity vs. smartness. The councillor was, in every respect, in
[625] favour of the new and opposed to the old way. He was not actually criticising the government, when referring to the activities of the
[769] village constables; nor was he criticising the village constables. On the contrary, the village constables of the early contact period are greatly revered; their names are remembered and recited in much the same way as those of other renowned ancestors. Those who were handcuffed this is the indignity remembered above all else--were lacking in smartness they just did not know the tricks for keeping out of trouble. The village constables, as I was also told at Hohorita, were the men who brought peace, who saw that people did not continue to fight each other.

At Hohorita, I had a series of discussions, at which a number of men participated, about Orokaiva history. On a number of points, which I could check, I was given reliable information. I would therefor

accept, as genuinely held by the Hohorita people at the present time, a view of history according to which the Orokaiva had only small gardens before the Europeans introduced axes and knives; it was only then that people started to make feasts, stopped eating wild fruit, etc. Here informants credited to Europeans innovations traditionally ascribed to their own culture heroes. During the same interview, I was told the people used to build houses by making a fence and putting leaves on top. The present house types, I was told, were introduced by Europeans. It so happened that this statement was substantially correct.

From these few examples (more data of the same kind could be quoted), it is already clear that the Orokaiva perceive some resemblance between the Europeans and their own culture heroes. The Orokaiva ascribe whatever cultural goods they possess to the action of culture heroes who brought them these goods in primeval time. This applies not only to material knowledge (the making of fire, houses, clothes, the growing of crops, etc.) but also to social behaviour (institutions of warfare, marriage, feasting, etc.). The Europeans manifestly brought with them innovations of the same scope. Like the culture heroes in the myths, the Europeans have many valuable new things, but they are reluctant to give them to the Orokaiva. They prefer to keep them for themselves. Occasionally, though, they do give some of them away, or are willing to trade them, or are successfully tricked into sharing them. One of the recent gifts for which the Orokaiva are especially grateful are the Local Government Councils. I asked some of the most experienced councillors whether they were able to conduct the councils according to their own ideas or were forced to follow ideas laid down by the government. I was told that the councils came "not from ourselves but from the administration. We don't know about the council. It belongs to the administration. It was given to the village people." The council was given much in the same way as fire had been given by a culture hero.

Beneficial though the Europeans undoubtedly are, they are also perceived as exasperating and dangerous: exasperating because of their refusal to share their goods, to set up proper relationships with the people and to adopt proper customs; dangerous because of the power of the police, the prisons, and--most of all--the Christian God. It is from this viewpoint that we should regard the Orokaiva interpretation of the Mount Lamington eruption as reported by Belshaw and Keesing. Belshaw reports that most Orokaiva explanations of the eruption were religious in nature: "Some people said that this was God's visitation because they had disobeyed the Bishop's instructions to build new churches. Others said that God had punished them because they had not helped the Allies sufficiently during the war and because some of them had betrayed missionaries to the Japanese . . . This sense of guilt is a most important factor in resettlement attitudes." (1951: 242) Keesing agrees with this summary, adding that the eruption resulted in "strong feelings of insecurity and even of guilt in their

628 I found them elsewhere among the Orokaiva, it naturally became no easier for the mission station to lead the village.

758 759 [653] During the time I was at Hohorita, there was no local medical service because the officer appointed by the Health Department was a Sangara who insisted that a house should be built for him before he arrived. (Orokaiva are bound by law to do such work, in payment for government services rendered.) His kinsmen at Hohorita thought that if he wanted a house, he should build it himself. The medical, however, was in no hurry at all to go home; he stayed at his previous post for almost a year after he should have been transferred. Hohorita complained to the Health authorities that they had no medical; they found that unless they built the house, no medical would be provided but they would have to go to Saiho for service. Finally they yielded. This was far from being a case of anomie: it was a battle about the status to be granted to public officials at Hohorita.

653 In Sivepe, nobody would have questioned this status; they would have built a house at once for any public official who would have wanted to live there. But then, such a person would be bound to be a stranger, not a person "like themselves." When a village has produced a dozen or so public officials of one sort or another, the question begins to look different: what is so special about these people that we have to build houses for them? Furthermore, once upon a time, the Sangara working timetable was rather flexible, but with cashcropping on the Hohorita scale, and long walking distances between home and work, the Hohorita people were rather busy earning money from coffee. Time had become an economic resource.

This was a frequent subject of mild argument between me and the other expatriates. The expatriates used to complain that the Orokaiva were no longer willing to do any work (i.e., perform free services such as I am now discussing). They thought that if the Orokaiva were to advance economically, they would need to work much harder. I used to tease the other expatriates by saying that this growing reluctance to do free work for the government (roads, houses for officials, etc.) was evidence for the success of the economic development policy the expatriates claimed to be promoting. They thought this to be a sick joke.

173 In an earlier chapter, I already referred to an unusual foreshortening of Orokaiva history practised by Sangara informants of today. It is certainly remarkable that, according to Sangara, the Orokaiva only began to make feasts <u>after</u> the time of European contact, because earlier they could not grow enough food to hold them. Statements of this sort were made in two places (Sombou, Hohorita) by elders sitting together in groups and instructing me. I have already explained how such statements fit the traditional <u>structure</u> of Orokaiva history: original time / culture established by culture heroes / present day. As the coming of the Europeans occurred more than two generations ago, this event would seem to have been confused with the coming of the [731] culture heroes. When I did, in a very innocent way, express my

173 astonishment about this kind of story, I was told in explanation that
731 at the time of the eruption, the old people could not run away and the old people all died. For this reason, old customs and old knowledge died also; those who were left behind--the children who could run fast enough to escape--were forced to accept the new way of life as they knew no other.

This suggestion of an abrupt break in cultural tradition is of course in itself mythology. The continuity was obvious enough to the observer. Nonetheless, the belief in discontinuity was an
178 important aspect of the modern Sangara self-group image. In the eruption,
731 Sangara lost the people who used to make the decisions, who used to set patterns of behaviour. The survivors were forced to put the pieces
[595] together as best they could. Many customs vanished on the day of the eruption, e.g., polygyny; those customs which survive in Sivepe, however, mostly survived to some extent in Hohorita too. But when I asked my Hohorita informants whether father-in-law still chased his son-in-law with a firebrand this definitely appeared to be out of fashion. For traditional knowledge as well as custom, Sivepe was the repository of much that Hohorita had left behind. Almost all the mythology had been lost; the dancing was much inferior because the people were so much busier with their coffee; on the other hand, feasting ceremonial
[764] had remained mostly intact. Burial rites were no longer as Williams described them but very much the same as in Sivepe, i.e., the essentials were intact but a great deal of restraint had been introduced, the body was no longer dressed and laid out in the traditional manner and, most important of all, the widow was no longer expected to stay with the dead man after burial.

184 In matters of food, clothing, housing and village improvement, tools and skills I found most of the same features as in Sivepe. The differences I found were, to some extent, in the greater availability of money, in the larger number of educated people, the larger number of persons who had migrated to towns where they held skilled jobs, the intensive contact between this educated élite outside the village and the educated élite inside it, and as a result, as far greater awareness of ideological and political issues than could be found in Sivepe. Stephen, the government driver at Inonda, had a sophistication comparable to this educated group at Hohorita, but he was alone and exchanged ideas only when he was in Popondetta, away from the village where wider political and ideological ideas would have aroused little interest.

Section 4: Leadership in Hohorita

622 At the time of my arrival at Hohorita, the traditional leader, a man called Amos, had recently died. After his death, he was revered with much ceremony. Thus, during my stay, a naterari (Williams: 1930: 226) was set up, i.e., a post to taboo the coconuts and betelnuts